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PROGRAM Joan Hamburg: How to Cope STATION WOR Radio  
DATE May 12, 1980 12:10 PM CITY New York  
SUBJECT Interview with Snepp, Hentoff and Emerson

JOAN HAMBURG: In 1977, Frank Snepp, CIA's principal analyst and briefer in Saigon before the evacuation at the end of the Vietnam War, secretly published his tell-all book, "Decent Interval." And as it says on the cover, that's an insider's account of Saigon's indecent end told by the CIA's chief strategy analyst in Vietnam.

The book was published quietly. Random House was the publisher. And Random House, having had experience before, knew what was involved. And they brought it out in a very quiet, discreet way, under wraps, so to speak.

At the end of February 1980, the Supreme Court decided that Frank Snepp had violated his contract with the Central Intelligence Agency, his former employer, by publishing his book without clearing it first with the agency. The punishment was severe, because the court said that Mr. Snepp had not only breached his contract, but a position of trust; and therefore he had to pay the government all present and future profits from the book, "Decent Interval."

For many people, this decision is more significant than just the surroundings of funds, although funds are indeed very important to Frank Snepp. It raises First Amendment questions. It raises questions about the right of the CIA, or any government agency, their ability to censor criticism on non-classified material.

We have a lot of people involved in issues like that, including Frank Snepp, author of the book. Nat Hentoff, who is an author, a member of the ACLU and other civil liberties organizations. Nat also has a book, "The First Freedom: The